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ABSTRACT

Three strategies for conducting research on private gift fund raising in higher education are discussed to promote interaction between institutional researchers and fund-raising officials. Attention is directed to: progress on standardized reporting for cost-effectiveness research; applications of a model for measuring effort, performance, and effects of fund-raising programs; a study of foundation support in private liberal arts colleges; and a study of educational fund raising in church-affiliated colleges. The three strategies consist of a process model, a predictive/ prescriptive model, and a purposive subsets model. The Jacobson process model is advantageous to researchers who wish to consider system changes over time and it also allows decision makers to state program objectives in terms of indicators. The Dean study of small church-related colleges advances a predictive formula for determining fund-raising potential and presents modifications in the formula that allows it to be used prescriptively to examine fund-raising potential and to maximize efforts directed at obtaining funds. The purposive subsets approach by Mack focuses on samples of Liberal Arts II colleges and foundations. A five-page reference list concludes the document. (SW)

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SETTING THE AGENDA IN FUND RAISING RESEARCH: LESSONS FROM CONTRASTING STRATEGIES

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This paper was presented at the Twenty-Sixth Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research held at the Marriott Orlando World Center, Orlando, Florida, June 22-25, 1986. This paper was reviewed by the AIR Forum Publications Committee and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC Collection of Forum Papers.

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ABSTRACT

As colleges and universities seek more systematic approaches to procuring private gifts, opportunities increase for institutional researchers to improve decision support systems for organizational leaders. Seeking to facilitate interaction between institutional researchers and fund raising officers, this paper reports on efforts aimed at increasing the quality of research on fund raising. The paper compares strategies by assessing progress on standardized reporting for cost-effectiveness research; applications of a model for measuring effort, performance and effects of fund raising programs; a study of foundation support in private liberal arts colleges; and a study of educational fund raising in church affiliated colleges.

I. INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem. Colleges and universities in the United States increasingly recognize the need to develop more systematic approaches to the procurement of financial resources. Institutional researchers will be called upon increasingly to apply their expertise to the improvement of organizational programs for procuring private gifts. These programs need to state more precisely what they do and how they measure effectiveness. Institutions of higher education face a problem because the demand for financial solutions is high but the quality of private-gift decision support systems is low.

The lack of reliable data in fund raising research and the inadequate exchange of findings obtained to date combine to produce a major and enigmatic situation in higher education. Badly needed are systematic efforts aimed at improving research quality and facilitating interaction between institutional researchers and fund raising officers.

Purpose of Paper This paper provides an overview of the status of research in private gifts fund raising for institutions of higher education. The paper examines three strategies worthy of consideration for conducting research.

Related Research. The three most comprehensive volumes devoted specifically to evaluation and research in the field of institutional advancement (fund raising, public relations and associated functions) are books by Leslie (1969), Jacobson (1978) and Heemann (1979). Leslie's Focus on Understanding and Support: A Study of College Management reports on his detailed survey of costs and revenues at 700 institutions of higher learning. The Jacobson volume, Evaluating Advancement Programs, describes evaluation concepts and techniques, presents case studies from six colleges and universities, and

illustrates techniques and findings with examples from fund raising and related program areas. Heemann's Analyzing the Cost Effectiveness of Fund Raising includes findings from "the most thorough analysis of fund-raising costs to date," (Heemann, 1979, p. xi) the study undertaken under the auspices of the Consortium on Financing Higher Education, which examined costs of fund raising and university relations at 25 private colleges and universities.

Both the Heemann and Jacobson books provide extensive bibliographies of articles, books, manuals, guides and reports. Additional sources for researchers are analytical reports of progress and trends in fund raising and related program activities (Richards and Sherratt, 1981, and Jacobson, 1982 and 1986).

It is encouraging to note that considerable progress has been made in the past decade in the preparation of cost-effectiveness data on fund raising programs. Cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses are of little use unless standards of accounting and reporting are defined, adopted and used. A major step forward was the publication of Management Reporting Standards for Educational Institutions: Fund Raising and Related Activities (CASE, 1982).

The work on Management Reporting Standards was initiated in 1979 when Warren Heemann of Georgia Institute of Technology organized a committee of knowledgeable development program managers. The study was supported by Exxon Educational Foundation. After work on the income side was circulated, the committee developed guidelines and formats for compiling and sharing expenditure data, including fund raising and related programs. The publication of Management Reporting Standards in 1982 marked the first time in history that dependable tools were available for readily and accurately comparing the cost-effectiveness of institutional fund raising programs with those of other

institutions. Progress reports on these efforts have been published by Heemann (1981) and his associates (Ridenour, 1986).

Dr. Robert Carbone of the University of Maryland organized a national conference held at the Carnegie Conference Center in Washington, D.C., in June 1985. Four concept papers were presented and participants discussed problems, issues and future directions at a Seminar on the Agenda for Fund Raising Research in Higher Education. A report on the conference is in process (Carbone, 1986).

II. INITIATIVES IN SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH: THREE STRATEGIES

All three studies reported here rely conceptually on a systems approach to organizational effectiveness (Yuchtman and Seashore, 1981, and Gratz and Salem, 1981). "If one does not have the means to relate to others in the same social system, then one cannot be said to be an integral part of that system" (Jacobson, 1978, p. 4). The task confronting institutions of higher education is one of developing exchanges and relationships with sources of support in a competitive marketplace.

Fund raising is considered to be a part of institutional advancement, which is defined as the management function responsible for direction of relationships between an organization and its publics for the mutual benefit of the organization and the publics. The major process by which the function is accomplished is communication, a necessary condition for achievement of understanding and moral and financial support (Jacobson, 1978, p.2).

A. Process Model

Statement of Problem. Officials in postsecondary education witness an increased demand for accountability and a growing stream of data. However, officials express disappointment in the lack of quality of information available for decision-making. Among the perplexed administrators are the fund raising officers. They are especially interested in identifying systematic methods for estimating realistic expectations for new or expanded programs and reliable normative benchmarks for gauging the effectiveness and efficiency of programs.

However, the problems are not insurmountable. Ways have been found to describe complex phenomena and organizations in terms of constructs that have meaning to decision makers. Economists and social scientists have developed a series of indicators that measure a wide realm of phenomena from the gross national product to the quality of life. Likewise, indicators can help in assessing fund raising programs.

An axiom of systems management states that an organization must adjust to the environment in which it operates. Analysis of an organization's key characteristics and factors governing the next larger system can assist fund raising managers as they project goals and plan programs (Dean, 1986).

Data on program status and change can be meaningful for decision makers and users of programs, for managers, and for in-house and external researchers who advise on program evaluation or carry it out. Indicators increase our ability to explain, monitor and assess fund raising programs.

Method. A conceptual framework developed a decade ago (Jacobson, 1978) helped raise for program managers and researchers the fundamental questions: What do you measure? What indicators best chart status, progress, trends and change? This model has been useful as an organizing framework that assists practitioners in understanding the evaluation process. It also assists researchers and evaluators in proceeding productively in consultation assignments and independent investigations.

The model presents three categories of indicators that help determine the effectiveness of institutional advancement programs. The categories are Effort, Performance and Effects. (See Figure 1.)

EFFORT examines the extent of commitment to the programs. Indicators are: Articulation of mission, goals and objectives; Financial support; Resource deployment; Organization, structure and maturation level; and Provision for policy input.

PERFORMANCE refers to progress in program implementation--the degree to which some goal or objective is being achieved. Indicators include: Personnel, (Does performance meet expectations?); Activities (Are desired activities being implemented as planned?); Products (Are desired outputs being produced?); and Financial performance (Are funds being acquired and used as planned?)

EFFECTS refers to the impact of programs--the consequence that output has on affected individuals and groups. Indicators are: Contact (Did the program reach the people it set out to reach?); Response--in attitudes and behavior (Did the program get its message across? Did users understand? Did users benefit?); and Relationship (Did the program alter the relationship between the initiator and the user?)

Figure 1. Framework for Evaluation of Fund Raising and Related Institutional Advancement Programs

Categories	*Indicators*
I. Effort (institutional commitment)	A. Articulation of mission, goals, and objectives *(What is the role of institutional advancement programs in the life of the institution?)*
	B. Financial support *(Is funding appropriate to the institution's financial resources and institutional advancement objectives?)*
	C. Resource deployment *(Is there an appropriate balance of personnel, facilities, equipment, supplies, and services?)*
	D. Organization and structure *(Does design serve functions?)*
	E. Provision for policy input *(What role does/should institutional advancement have in institution policy-level formation?)*
II. Performance (progress in program implementation)	A. Personnel *(Does performance meet expectations?)*
	1. managers
	2. staff
	3. other (for example, volunteers and consultants)
	B. Activities *(Are desired activities being implemented as planned?)*
	C. Products *(Are desired outputs being produced?)*
	D. Financial performance *(Are funds being acquired and used as planned?)*
III. Effects (user impact)	A. Contact (exposure, attention) *(Did program reach people it set out to reach?)*
	B. Response (attitudes and behavior) *(Did program get its message across? Did users understand? Did users support? Did users benefit?)*
	1. information
	2. persuasion
	3. reinforcement
	4. activation
	C. Relationship (between institution and user) *(Did program alter relationship?)*
	1. nature and status of relationship
	a. institutional image
	b. user satisfaction
	c. goal discrepancy
	d. barriers to information flow
	e. university-community compatibility
	f. provision for feedback
	2. change in relationship
	a. attitudes (for example, confidence level)
	b. behavior (for example, financial support)

Source: Jacobson, H. K. (Ed.) (1978). New directions in institutional advancement: evaluating advancement programs, no. 1. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 19.

Space limitations prevent full discussion of the indicators here. However, explanations of each indicator and examples of applications in studies at colleges and universities around the nation are presented in Evaluating Advancement Programs (Jacobson, 1978).

Results. The publication advancing the process model has attracted favorable review in the profession (Beeman, 1979, and Richards and Sherratt, 1981, p. 33.) The volume has been recommended as one of the best books for fund raising managers (Willmer and Rowland, 1979, p. 32) and has provided a conceptual framework on which additional studies have been built.

The evaluation framework has generated doctoral dissertations and other applications (H. Rowland, 1979). One of the most fruitful adaptations is that by Willmer (1981), who developed norms for justifying and comparing institutional advancement programs by surveying 191 small, independent colleges. Willmer's model not only looked at structure and format for a fund raising program but also considered the process by which fund raising took place. The construct validity of Willmer's model was confirmed by evaluating the scope of his sample and the benchmarks noted as examples of successful program components. The surveyed colleges were all members of the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges (CASC) (since 1981, the Council of Independent Colleges). The study was undertaken with the express support of CASC. The results of Willmer's investigation stood the test of peer review when presented to the 1979 National Institute of CASC. His study was the foundation for the institute's theme, "Effective Fund Raising for the Small Independent College: A Comprehensive Approach." He has continued to expand his studies (Willmer, 1986).

The Willmer model in turn provided the basis for a study conducted by Dean (1985).

B. Predictive/Prescriptive Model

Statement of Problem. Conducting research for his doctoral dissertation, Dean (1985) observed that small church-related colleges have not been sufficiently multidimensional in responding to financial crisis. He hypothesized that the colleges would benefit from adopting a many-faceted, systematic model of fund raising and objective evaluation of their fund raising potential in light of both environmental and financial resource variables.

Small church-related colleges are pressed to attract increased financial support. The study examined how this could be achieved and to what extent increased support is predictable. Three major questions were asked. Can a college utilize a predictive formula for determining fund raising potential? Can it contrast its operative framework of educational fund-raising against a proven model? Can it determine a course of action to enhance its fund raising activities?

The purpose of the study was twofold: first, to assess the construct validity of a predictive formula for determining fund raising potential in small church-related colleges; secondly, to identify modifications in the predictive formula which allow it to address denominational support as a factor in potential gift income. Accomplishment of these purposes would provide a college with a methodology whereby the fund raising potential of the institution could be examined and maximized.

Related Studies. Several model fund raising programs are described in the literature. Some relate to discrete program components while others encompass the entire program. With the exception of the work of Willmer (1981) the various approaches identified as model fund raising programs were rejected. Pickett

(1981) identified policies in educational fund raising at selected colleges to determine which occured most often in colleges that he classified as "over productive"; however, he did not propose an "ideal" fund raising program. Cramer (1965) studied 55 colleges which were members of the Council for Advancement of Small Colleges. He identified 49 variables generally thought to influence an institution's fund raising effectiveness. The study did not address the process of raising funds.

Using a case study approach, Gabrielsen (1974) proposed "a set of 20 general principles which serve as a model to guide the establishment and/or improvement of successful small college fund raising programs" (p. 10). Langeler (1959), Sherratt (1975), and McGinnis (1980) all studied and described the organizational structure of development programs at selected institutions with particular attention to practices which were proven successful. Selected institutions within the State University of New York system were the subjects of a study by Webb (1982). Webb proposed to "identify the main criteria and characteristics of the ideal development program" for that state system (p. 41). Wolshon (1981) studied colleges comprising the Michigan College Foundation Consortium "to design a model program for alumni fund raising at private institutions of higher learning" (p. 9). Although these studies included an evaluative component, they did not propose a process assessment model.

The most inviting model of all those reviewed was that developed by Willmer (1981), based on the conceptual framework which uses the indicators of Effort, Performance and Effects advanced by Jacobosn (1978).

Method. This study included 26 private, church-related, coeducational, baccalaureate degree granting institutions. The

institutions had average enrollments of 500-1,000 students for 1981, 1982 and 1983. Also required was the availability of financial data on these institutions, using as a source the Council for Financial Aid to Education (CFAE) or audited financial statements. Four colleges were studied in-depth through case studies.

Data were generated by using a questionnaire, interviews and an assessment of fund raising potential as predicted by a mathematical equation.

Results. Three major questions were posed under "Statement of Problem." Findings indicate that all three questions can be answered affirmatively. The data prove that fund raising potential for church-related colleges can be predicted by a mathematical formula. When a college's educational fund raising program and process are contrasted to an established "ideal" model for fund raising, points of the program's conformity and non-conformity to the model are apparent. Points of non-conformity should be indicators for corrective action to bring the college's program of fund raising into compliance with the assessment model.

The data and analysis from this study indicate that denominational support is an important factor in the financial health of church-related colleges. When used with value of the endowment, denominational support could be used to project 78.4 percent of the variance for predicted gift income in the population of 26 church-related colleges in this study.

It appears that the location of a college (rural or metropolitan) has some effect on its fund raising potential. This finding is most likely attributable to the quality of the reservoir of financial resources which are available for the college to draw upon. This is a disturbing matter, since Astin and Lee (1972) report that the great

majority of church-related colleges of this size are located in non-metropolitan areas.

Colleges of this type may benefit from a re-evaluation of their relationship to their governing board and to the denominational constituency in general. The data do not prove that colleges receiving the greatest percentage of total gifts from the sponsoring denomination are governed by boards of trustees closely aligned with the denominations. However, the data do lend some support to this idea. Likewise, it seems that a denomination which has control of the governing board through powers of appointment or election is more likely to provide greater financial support.

Productivity as a quality measure of fund raising for church-related colleges should be closely evaluated in terms of the sources from which funds come. This should be done in relation to both total gift income and predicted gift income. In this study the college receiving the least percentage of total gift support from its denomination was in closest conformity to the "ideal" fund raising model. This college also raised the most money. This finding lends crediblity to the notion that more than total dollars raised should be considered when measuring the productivity of a chruch-related college's fund raising program.

C. Purposive Subsets Model

Statement of Problem. Trends of no growth and retrenchment in the 1980s especially affect the Liberal Arts II colleges, since these lesser known or "invisible colleges" are particularly vulnerable to uncertain futures (Astin and Lee, 1972, p. 1). Furthermore, although foundation support is the third largest source of voluntary support to

higher education, the methods of obtaining foundation assistance are the least understood in college and university fund raising (Broce, 1979).

Analysis of data in the annual survey of voluntary support by the Council for Financial Aid to Education (see, for example, CFAE, 1980) shows that Liberal Arts II colleges vary considerably in the amount of grant income received from philanthropic foundations. What contributes to the variance? The doctoral study by Mack (1983) sought to (1) analyze previous foundation grants received by a selected group of Liberal Arts II colleges to determine the levels of grant income and the stated purposes of these grants, (2) interview selected foundation officials and administrators to identify specific foundation, institutional and development office factors perceived as most helpful in obtaining foundation funds, and (3) analyze the procedures and techniques utilized by colleges to develop a model for improving an institution's ability to secure funds in the foundation market.

Related Research. Jarrell (1979) found that most foundations give on a local or regional basis and that research universities have the greatest access to foundation support, while two-year colleges have the least access. Meyer (1971) reported that agency contact influences level of foundation support, and that maintaining personal contact with prospective donors enhances fund raising results. Jones (1972) studied imbalance of foundation support at a given university and concluded that company foundations gave a greater share of their funds to engineering and business administration programs, special purpose foundations favored the medical sciences, and general purpose foundations favored applied sciences and humanities.

Cheit and Lobman (1979) examined several aspects of foundation giving, including financial support of academic programs, types of

projects funded and levels of support to the private sector. Dane (1974) focused on program support. He found financial support for plant expansion, the faculty and the institution to be the concern of foundations prior to 1970, while student support programs were the emphasis after 1970. Lawson (1976) found eight factors that officials from foundations and private institutions agreed were important in evaluating grant requests.

Methods. The focused interests of the researcher made it appropriate to choose purposive samples for investigating the particular questions at hand. Samples were chosen from a population of 449 Liberal Arts II colleges in the Carnegie report, A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (Carnegie Council, 1976), and the 3,138 foundations listed in the seventh edition of The Foundation Directory (Lewis, 1979). The samples were limted to colleges and foundations in the Great Lakes region (Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin).

For information on private gifts the researcher used the CFAE annual reports for a five-year period (1974-75 through 1978-79). Eleven colleges were included in the sample. These colleges met the following criteria: (1) Received annually $500,000 in voluntary support from all sources in the five-year period, and (2) Received annually a greater share of their total voluntary support for current operating purposes than for capital support.

The colleges were divided into two subgroups based on receipt of at least $100,000 annually in foundation dollars and receipt of $1,000,000 or more in five years. Six colleges met the two criteria and comprised Group A (institutions "more successful" in obtaining foundation support). Five colleges comprised Group B ("less successful"). Four foundations were chosen for study. Data were

collected through secondary analysis of the colleges' annual reports to donors, Internal Revenue Service records, and 29 personal interviews with foundation officials, college presidents, chief development officers and development officers.

Results. Characteristics of grants: Foundations award more grants of $5,000 or less to Liberal Arts II colleges than any other size of grant. Of the foundation grants of $5,000 or less, a Liberal Arts II college can expect to receive the majority of these grants in sums of $1,000 or less. An inverse relationship exists between the number of grants and the level of grant income, with a few large foundation grants (over $50,000) providing the largest share of grant income. Grants for operating support are the most common type of grant awarded.

Selected factors associated with foundation support: Of the foundation variables examined, the most helpful in obtaining support were a personal contact by a college representative with a foundation official, geographical proximity to the college receiving the money, and easy-access organization structure in the foundation. Of the institutional variables examined, the characteristics which most enhanced grant receipts were the college's geographic location, ability to maintain a balanced budget and quality of academic programs. Of the development office variables examined, quality of a college's proposal was most helpful in obtaining support, followed by long-range planning and time spent researching foundations.

Fund raising procedures and techniques: The most critical factors were organized research; personalized approaches by the president, trustees and development staff; and centralization of the fund raising function in the college. Additional findings may be examined by consulting a summary prepared by Mack (1986).

III. DISCUSSION

A. Summary and Conclusions

This paper presented three strategies for conducting research on educational fund raising. The Jacobson process model is composed of the categories of Effort, Performance and Effects. This framework has proven to be productive as a conceptual basis for designing and conducting research and evaluation. The process model is advantageous to researchers who wish to consider system changes over time and to answer questions about programs evolving or adapting to contingencies (Gratz and Salem, 1981, p. 6). The process model is valuable to decision makers because it allows program objectives to be stated in terms of the quantitative dimensions of indicators, thereby enhancing their policy relevance and utility in policy deliberations.

The Dean study of small church-related colleges advances a predictive formula for determining fund raising potential. It also presents modifications in the formula which allow it to be used prescriptively to examine fund raising potential and to maximize efforts directed at obtaining funds.

The purposive subsets approach used by Mack focuses on samples of Liberal Arts II colleges and foundations. This approach allows the investigator to address specific categories of interest.

Which is the best strategy to use? There is no single answer to this question. The selection will be based on the purposes of the study. The choice among the three should be made in full knowledge that no one approach necessarily accounts for all the behavior or phenomena of concern. Indeed, the authors present the spectrum of studies to illustrate the value of an eclectic approach to research in fund raising.

Productive scholarship is objective, transmissible and cumulative. Therefore research should be perceived as a continuing process. The research effort should build theory as well as state and clarify hypotheses. The ongoing series of inquiries should provide researchers with an opportunity to exchange findings in a way that increases the likelihood of not only generating more specific knowledge but also developing more sound generalizations.

B. Toward An Agenda for Fund Raising Research

Evolving Trends. The authors are encouraged by the following trends:

1. Increased interest. Worthy of note are the efforts by various organizations to improve the quality of fund raising research. Examples are the projects organized by CASE-NACUBO (Council for Advancement Support of Education and the National Association of College and University Business Officers), NSFR-ICE (National Society of Fund Raisers-Institute of Continuing Education), Independent Sector and United Way Institute. The NSFR-ICE efforts have been reported by Smallwood and Levis (1977). Evidence of progress by Independent Sector are its annual reports identifying researchers and providing descriptions of research in progress on giving, voluntary action and not-for-profit activity (Independent Sector, 1985). The 1986 Research Forum cosponsored by Independent Sector (IS) and United Way Institute (UWI) served as a stimulus to additional research by publishing papers (IS and UWI, 1986) and providing a meeting ground for more than 200 scholars and leaders of voluntary and donor organizations. Another sign of progress is the action by the president of CASE, who in early 1986 appointed a special National Committee on

Research to encourage research about institutional advancement functions, including fund raising.

2. Standardization efforts. The Management Reporting Standards referred to earlier in the paper have been discussed at regional and national professional meetings, gaining considerable visibility. CFAE modified its reporting format in 1985 to make it compatible with Standards. As a result, the more than 1,600 institutions which participate in the only systematic national survey of fund raising results are now asked to submit their data in accordance with the new standards.

Recommendations. The authors make the following suggestions for advancing the quality of research on fund raising:

1. Openminded, flexible approach. There should be a broad, general approach to making progress in research in this field. Appropriate methodologies and techniques from many disciplines should be applied to further such research, evaluation and planning.

2. Evolutionary setting. Quality research will not be achieved overnight. The area of fund raising indicators is an example of research that could benefit many decision makers. However, findings worthy of wide application will not likely come from a one-shot project but from a program conducted over time. A series of studies will be needed before a select group of meaningful variables emerge. Questions of reliability and validity also must be addressed.

3. Systematizing the continuing work on unfinished business. The CASE-NACUBO effort to standardize the reports of gift revenue deserves expanded attention and support. This base provides an opportunity to increase the sophistication of cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness studies. Although Standards provides a format for reporting the cost of fund raising, no organization is systematically collecting and analyzing detailed, uniform expenditure data from a

representatively large group of colleges, universities and second schools. Initiatives are under way to help remedy this shortcoming ("Lily Fund to Finance Study," 1986).

4. Role of national associations. The professional associations of fund raisers and institutional researchers should cooperate in encouraging the collection, interpretation, exchange and dissemination of information with respect to fund raising processes and effects. These associations should also further the professional development and training of individuals engaged in research, evaluation and planning. Financial support should be obtained to facilitate progress toward these goals.

5. Nature of cooperative effort. Fund raisers and institutional researchers should work together to achieve progress. How can they do this? Practitioner dialog and researcher inquiry should interact to spur initiatives and priorities.

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